

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 197939

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

INFO AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 197939

E.O. 11652: XGDS - IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

TAGS: SNAR, TH

SUBJECT: MISSING NARCOTICS

REF: BANGKOK 20880

1. THE DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES THE EMBASSY'S INQUIRIES AS WELL AS THE POINTS MADE IN REFTEL. WHILE SOMEWHAT DISMAYED AT THE STATE OF CONFUSION IN THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH, WE ARE NONETHELESS ENCOURAGED THAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE BEING MADE. YOUR EXPRESSIONS OF OFFICIAL CONCERN OVER RTG STORAGE AND DESTRUCTION PROCEDURES FOR SEIZED NARCOTICS ARE HELPFUL AND THE SUBJECT SHOULD BE PRESSED TO SEE IF SOME REASONABLE SOLUTION CAN BE WORKED OUT.

2. GIVEN THE DISORGANIZED STATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTRY RECORDS AND INVENTORY, WE WONDER IF OFFICIAL INQUIRIES WILL EVER BE ABLE TO ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT
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PAGE 02 STATE 197939

LARGE QUANTITIES OF SEIZED NARCOTICS WERE, OR CURRENTLY ARE FINDING THEIR WAY BACK TO THE ILLICIT MARKET. CON-

SEQUENTLY WE HOPE THAT ALTERNATIVE INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES CAN BE IDENTIFIED OR DEVELOPED THAT WOULD GIVE US INDEPENDENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE DISPOSITION OF NARCOTICS AND POTENTIAL "RECYCLING" WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

3. RECOGNIZING THE STORAGE SECURITY PROBLEM IN THAILAND DEPARTMENT AGREES FULLY THAT EFFECTIVE DESTRUCTION OF SEIZED NARCOTICS IS PREFERABLE TO DISPOSAL BY SALE TO PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES. WE OFFERED THE LATTER SOLUTION ONLY AS AN ALTERNATIVE WHICH MIGHT BE VIEWED MORE FAVORABLY BY THE RTG. MAJOR AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES HAVE A USE FOR AND ARE WILLING TO PURCHASE SEIZED HEROIN AND MORPHINE. WE ARE ASSURED BY THESE PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES THAT HEROIN CAN EASILY BE CONVERTED BACK INTO MORPHINE BASE, WHICH IS IN TURN AN EXCELLENT SOURCE OF BOTH MEDICINAL MORPHINE AND CODEINE. WHILE US FIRMS CANNOT IMPORT THESE NARCOTICS INTO THE US, THEY HAVE ASSURED US THAT THEY CAN AND WILL EXCHANGE THEM FOR RAW OPIUM WITH VARIOUS EUROPEAN PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS WHICH CAN IN TURN PROCESS THEM LEGALLY. ROBINSON

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